


To host a #YALILearns event, you don't need to be an expert!

YALI Network member Kerry Byamungu holds a [#YaliLearns](#) event on [#Africa4Her](#) in  Tanzania. (Courtesy of Kerry Byamungu)

For the past two weeks, the YALI Network has called on members to join its [#YALILearns](#) initiative as a way of giving back to the community. If you're interested, first take an online course. You can choose among topics ranging from business and entrepreneurship to climate change to civic leadership. After passing the quiz at the end of the course and earning your certificate, the next step is to plan an event and share what you learned with others.

You can use the YALI Network online courses as a great way to generate discussion around whichever of those topics is of interest to your community,


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Facilitate instead of teach

The good news is that you are not expected to be an expert on the subject you have chosen to share. The courses are designed so that of all the information is provided by the videos, audio files or transcripts. Instead of being a teacher who has to come up with a curriculum, you are a facilitator. In other words, your job is much less formal than someone who expected to deliver a lecture or have all of the answers. Instead, you are a fellow member of the group — one who is driving the discussion and encouraging everyone to participate.

A #YALILearns event doesn't have to feel like a classroom. Facilitation is about empowering others. A skilled facilitator will create conditions in which a group can work together effectively. They will also steer everyone back toward the end goal whenever the discussions get side-tracked.

Event organizer Joyce Ikpaahindi (left) with 2015 YALI Fellows Fatu Ogwuche and  Benjamin Dankaka (Courtesy of Joyce Ikpaahindi)

Joyce Ikpaahindi, a YALI Network member in Nigeria, saw the need to develop in her community a stronger sense of how to engage effectively in public service to bring about change. She designed an event around the YALI Network Online Course "[Strengthening Public Sector Service](#)."

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Ikpaahindi also enlisted the support of two 2015 Mandela Washington Fellows, Fatu Ogwuche and

Benjamin Dankaka, who shared their experiences on the Fellowship program and also their leadership experience in the Nigerian public sector. “Real-life examples and experiences shared by the Fellows proved to be quite popular with the participants,” she said. “A good #YALILearns event should be as practical, engaging and hands-on as possible.”

Both Ikpaahindi and Bonsu created their events by combining a relevant [YALI Network online course](#) with additional discussions and presentations from community leaders. The particulars of the program are up to you, since you know your community best — as long as you bring people together, share ideas and take away a resolve to create positive change.

If you want to hold a #YALILearns event of your own, look at the [#YALILearns page](#) to learn more about how to facilitate your event and choose a topic that will most benefit your audience. A local partner such as a university or civic group can be useful in finding a venue for your event and helping you get the word out.

During your event, make sure to take pictures, and then let us know how it went at the [#YALILearns feedback page](#) so that we can share your success with the Network.

[A Step By Step Planning Guide On Hosting a #YALILearns Event](#)



By Chukwuma Ephraim Okenwa

As a YALI Network member you have probably taken at least one YALI Network Online Course and earned a certificate and are perhaps contemplating organizing a #YALILearns event to share what you learned with your sphere of contact. However, the challenge might be on how to go about it.

Organizing a [#YALILearns](#) event is not just the right thing to do, it is the smart step to take after you have gone through a YALI Network Online Course. It offers you an opportunity to consolidate what you learned and to give back to your community and to help mentor other young Africans.

#YALILearns events involve educating your community with shared YALI Network resources, hence you should never charge a fee to participants.

You will find the steps outlined here a useful guide for hosting a successful #YALILearns event.

Stick to the Basics

Which YALI Network online course do you wish to facilitate? That should help to give a clue what kind of audience you will have to engage. Choose an audience whose individuals are directly or indirectly concerned with the proposed topic. Someone organizing a #YALILearns event on climate

change, may consider inviting farmers, government agencies or individuals.

Farmers could be encouraged by such event to do more for afforestation. Individuals will learn how their small actions can negatively impact our climate and how slight adjustments on their part will help greatly in reversing the trend. The government agencies in turn will be motivated to sponsor bills that will favor the climate.

A topic such as *Ending Violence Against Women and Girls* sounds appropriate for a feminine audience but in the real sense is good for the male folks, who in most cases are the culprits when it comes to gender-based violence.

A civic leadership course would make much sense to leaders of NGOs and leaders of civil society groups.

The course objectives can serve as a guide in deciding what kind of persons will benefit the most from your #YALILearns event. Each lesson includes a discussion guide with objectives and important points for your audience.

Choice of Venue

Choosing a venue will have great impact on your event. The venue for the event sets the mood and tone before your audience arrives.

Consider using a natural environment with green areas or trees for your event on climate change; a Women Development Centre for the topic Paving Way for the Women Entrepreneurs, etc. Where such relative venues are not readily accessible, the available one can be modified to reflect the theme of your event.

A #YALILearns event can actually be held in any venue that you consider conducive to your audience; the environment automatically becomes a #YALILearns “classroom” once the online course is streamed, or when the transcripts are distributed and discussed among participants.

Aesthetics such as roll-up banners, relevant charts/pictures can also help to reflect the theme, but are not at all obligatory. A small group could discuss these important issues and review materials in any venue at all.

As the administrator at a school, I have access to a site that is optimal for learning. It is equipped with computers and printers. If there are similar venues near you, I would recommend that you contact them to see if they would let you use their space. When I make use of the school premises where I work, I do so at no cost. However on two occasions when I hosted the #YALILearns events at some other venues, I took time to share the vision of YALI and the purpose of the #YALILearns events with the owners of such place; the goodwill was awesome. I got discounts of 90% and 50% respectively. In those cases, I fund the event myself and I take delight in doing so. YALI educates me for free and that’s my own little way of extending the same opportunities to my own sphere of contacts. When you find a venue that is willing to support #YALILearns, share it with others. I have told the YALI Network members within Enugu, Nigeria to feel free to apply to use my school for their #YALILearns Event – at no cost!

Promote Your Event



Create your event in the YALI Network Face2Face group at www.facebook.com/groups/YALInetwork to invite YALI Network members in the areas near you.

You can invite friends, family and others via SMS, Whatsapp or email. I have found bulk SMS quite effective. Speaking to individuals on one-on-one basis has also yielded good results. I also make sure to create an event at the YALI Network Face2Face group by visiting <https://www.facebook.com/groups/yalinetwork/events/>, then finding the button for “Create Event.” Make sure to provide city, country and event details - then share the event with the group to invite other YALI Network members.

A letter of invitation is also recommended, if you wish to invite high profile individuals in your community, but again, this is not required. You can facilitate many of these courses without inviting high profile individuals. You are probably more of an expert on many of these topics than you give yourself credit for - and starting a conversation with the discussion guides makes the event inclusive and participatory. In addition, there will be audience members who will be able to contribute their knowledge to the conversation.

Be Consistent with #YALILearns Ideals

You can present the YALI Network Online Course either by streaming the video or audio, downloading the video or audio, or you can print and distribute the written transcripts to participants.

Be sure to review the lesson discussion guides for the course you wish to facilitate. Find time to watch the lesson, [Designing and Delivering Training](#). In all, let the learning objectives serve as a sure guide to evaluating how successful your event was.

Be sure to keep records of your events: highlights, pictures or video and sometimes a communiqué are reasonably expected.

Make it Very Interactive



Have participants choose a partner and have each person introduce themselves briefly. This should include name, occupation and personal interests/motivation and way(s) the individual serves to improve his community.

Initiate brief discussions after watching each segment of the video. Give room for group activity by splitting the participants into small groups to brainstorm on relevant issues connected with the course and having a selected person by the group to present to the whole audience what they discussed in their unit groups.

Awareness skits are another great way to engage the participants. For instance if you are facilitating a session on the topic *Supporting a Girl's Right to Learn*, you can have a participant play the role of an out-of-school girl and have another person try to convince her to go back to school. At the end of the skit, ask the out-of-school girl, if she was indeed convinced.

Encourage participants to share their experiences where applicable. A #YALILearns event on *Ending Violence Against Women and Girls*, will not be complete without having a few persons who have experienced gender- based violence share their experiences.

After the event, I make room for the participants to respond to the lectures, sharing with us things they were able to LEARN, UNLEARN AND RELEARN and how they intend to take advantage of their new experience to do things differently. Thereafter I advocate strongly for participants to visit yali.state.gov, review the course once more and take the online quiz to earn their YALI Network Online Course certificate.

Keep the flow

Encourage participants to join the network by filling in their details at yali.state.gov. Collect the email addresses of participants and submit them alongside your report on the [#YALILearns feedback page](#).

The email address that you submitted could assist in inviting them to join the biggest network of young African Leaders.


Most importantly remember to share the highlights of your events with other YALI Network members on the [YALI Network Face2Face](#) group.

This will inspire other Network members to do likewise, thus resulting in an ever increasing impact.

You can start now!



#YALILearns: Air Conditioning, Aerosols and Agriculture

Participants at the December 17 

#YALILearns event in Ibadan, Nigeria

(Courtesy of Okunlola Festus)

With [#YALIGoesGreen](#), more than 9,000 YALI Network members across Africa have committed to taking action on climate change and earned their certificate in the “[Understanding Climate Change](#)” course.

More than 300 members have told us about the climate events they’ve held in their respective countries. We want to share with you some of the great feedback we’re getting about these

#YALILearns events by taking a look at specific events over the next few weeks.

On December 17, Okunlola Festus and Ogunwole Omotola, two Network members in Ibadan, Nigeria, training with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, worked with GreenWealth Agripreneurs, the institute's agribusiness initiative, to invite institute participants to an event centered around the climate-change course.

Although they were unable to stream the course video, they used the transcript and [discussion guide](#) from the "Resources" tab of each lesson to design a PowerPoint presentation. The presentation on climate change science and solutions was followed by a wide-ranging discussion. "When the participants discussed how they contribute to climate change, they were all shocked that by spraying things like perfume or deodorant, they were contributing to climate change," Festus said. "The majority of them committed to using deodorants and perfumes without the harmful aerosols."

They also discussed what roles they could take in their communities to curtail the unsafe dumping of hazardous waste. The topic of how excessive use of air conditioning harms the climate led to a [Facebook chat](#) on the topic following the event.

Festus said he would encourage YALI Network members planning an event to be ready to be open-minded and to incorporate the views of participants as the discussion evolves. "You have to allow every participant to be involved in the discussion — carry everyone along."

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[Leadership and Sharing with #YALILearns](#)



Participants in a YALI Learns event on leadership training and land law in Mampong, Kumasi, Ghana (Courtesy of Oxford Bonsu)

Communities thrive on sharing and learning. #YALILearns is a Networkwide initiative that offers you the opportunity to build networks in your community with events organized by you or your fellow Network members and tailored to the topics that will make positive change where you live.

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Event organizer Joyce Ikpaahindi (left) with 2015 YALI Fellows Fatu Ogwuche and Benjamin Dankaka.(Courtesy Joyce Ikpaahindi)

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